



3/12/2007

To: House Human Services Committee  
From: Cliff Christian, Director of Governmental Affairs  
Subject: Support of SB 95

The American Heart Association and the American Stroke Association are in full support of SB 95. The remaining safeguards in current law do an excellent job of requiring regular maintenance and training on AEDs. So, even if you, as requested in Senate Bill 95, curtail the physician supervision we are convinced no damage whatsoever will result. As you are all probably very aware, physician supervision in all of Montana's communities is impossibility especially in our rural areas where a trained EMS technician may be the closet thing to a physician within hundreds of miles

A Defibrillator is used to treat victims of sudden cardiac arrest who are not responsive and not breathing normally. If you have concerns about your health or an existing medical condition, please talk to your doctor. A defibrillator is not a replacement for seeking medical care.

During sudden cardiac arrest, the electrical system of the heart short circuits, causing the heart to quiver rather than pump in a normal rhythm. It typically results in the abnormal heart rhythm know as ventricular fibrillation and it usually happens without warning and the majority of people have no previously recognized symptoms of heart disease. And it most often happens at home. For the best chance of survival, a defibrillator should be used within 5 minutes of ventricular fibrillation caused by sudden cardiac arrest. Yet, less than 1 in 20 people survive largely because a defibrillator does not arrive in time. The defibrillator treats the most common cause of sudden cardiac arrest by delivering a shock to the heart. Use a defibrillator and CPR, as needed, until emergency professionals arrive.

The defibrillator is the latest in essential safety equipment. Fire extinguishers. Seat belts. Airbags. Home security systems, all essential safety equipment to protect ourselves and our loved ones. You know they are there, silently standing by, just in case.

Even though a defibrillator holds some inherent dangers such as abuse by youth looking for a new experience, the rewards far out weigh the distractions. Most AEDs are closely supervised and maintained by professionals in the medical community including EMS personnel. In addition, many police, fire and highway patrol are trained in the proper usage of this life saving equipment.

Should you have additional questions or comments, you can reach me at:

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